

articles and enrol themselves in the Brotherhood. They were willing enough to accept their oppressors as allies, and even as leaders, and among the chiefs of these rustic "Haufen" or bands we find men of knightly rank, like Florian Geyer of Franconia and Stephan Menzingen of Suabia. Gotz von Berlichingen himself played the *role* of generalissimo of the united peasant bands at Heilbron.

Among those who were horrified by the doings of the peasants was Martin Luther. Luther at first adopted a fairly moderate, though at the same time an unsympathetic, attitude towards the movement. The peasants had invoked his name in testimony of the righteousness of their cause, and sought his opinion. This opinion he gave in "An Exhortation to Peace in response to the Twelve Articles of the Boers in Suabia." From which it is evident that, as far as the movement sprang from antagonism to intolerable oppression, Luther was inclined to be sympathetic. His sympathy, it is further evident, was all the more spontaneous in cases where the insurgents were the subjects of anti-Lutheran princes and lords. On the other hand, it is no less evident that the fact that Luther's theological opponents, like Carlstadt and Miinzer, were among the prophets of the movement was sufficient to prejudice him against it. It must not be forgotten that to take a different side from Luther in any cause was, *ipso facto*, to incur denunciation. In the first place, he lays the responsibility for the situation on the princes and lords, and especially "the blind bishops and rnad parsons and monks," who have despised every warning from God and man, and whose oppressions the poor common man cannot and may not longer endure. "I have proclaimed it already, Beware of the text, *Effundit Contempt-urn super Principes*, God, dear lords, not the peasants, it is who stands against you to punish your madness." He will show His wrath, especially against those "who have said that they will root out the teaching of Luther." For this outbreak he himself disclaims all responsibility. Those who would saddle him and his doctrine with rebellion are slanderers. It lies at their door and that of the false prophets (z>., Luther's opponents). Let them eschew harsh methods, and use reason with the Boers as with a drunk man or a lunatic. Some of their demands are reasonable. As